

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A personal watercraft comprising:

a hull, the hullshell comprising a transom;

a deck disposed on the hull;

a straddle seat disposed on the deck;

handlebars mounted on the deck forward of the seat for steering the personal watercraft;

a first compartment defined between the hull and the deck;

a tunnel defined by the hullshell, the tunnel extending forwardly from the transom, the tunnel being defined laterally by the hullshell, the tunnel having at least an open bottom and rear,

a ride plate mounted to the hullshell at the bottom of the tunnel;

the tunnel and the ride plate defining a second compartment;

an internal combustion engine supported by the ride plate and disposed in the second compartment and below the seat tunnel; and

a jet pump operatively connected to the internal combustion engine, supported by the ride plate, and disposed in the second compartmenttunnel.

2. (Currently Amended) The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the at least one of the hull and the deckshell defines a top of the tunnel.
3. (Currently Amended) The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the engine is accessibleinstalled in the watercraft from below.
4. (Currently Amended) The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the engine is accessibleinstalled in the watercraft from the rear of the watercraft.
5. (Currently Amended) The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the ride plate forms a continuous surface with an underwater portion of the hullshell.
6. (Currently Amended) The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the second compartmenttunnel is sealed off from the first compartmentan interior of the shell.
7. (Currently Amended) The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the ride plate is flexibly mounted to the hullshell.

8. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, further comprising one of a battery, engine electronics, and a fuel tank disposed in the first compartment~~the shell~~, wherein the one of a battery, engine electronics, and fuel tank is operatively connected to the engine.
9. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, further comprising an airbox disposed in the first compartment~~the shell~~, wherein the airbox operatively connects to the engine.
10. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the engine comprises an engine oil pan mounted to the ride plate.
11. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the engine comprises an engine oil pan integrally formed with the ride plate.
12. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, further comprising a gearing and a clutch operatively disposed between the engine and the jet pump.
13. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the engine is inclined about its longitudinal axis such that the engine is disposed at an angle with respect to a vertical axis.
14. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the engine is disposed above the jet pump, wherein the engine includes a crankshaft, wherein the jet pump includes a driveshaft, and wherein the driveshaft and the crankshaft occupy overlapping longitudinal positions on the watercraft.
15. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the engine includes a crankshaft and the jet pump includes a driveshaft, and wherein the crankshaft and driveshaft are parallel to each other.
16. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the engine comprises a crankcase that is integrally formed with the ride plate.
17. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the jet pump comprises an intake area that is at least partially integrally formed with the ride plate.
18. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the jet pump comprises an intake area, and the engine comprises a crankcase that is at least partially integrally formed with the intake area.

19. **(Currently Amended)** The personal watercraft of claim 1, wherein the engine comprises a crankcase, and the jet pump comprises a driveshaft that is supported by the crankcase.